

Chapter 8

The Later Medieval Period

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8.1 Introduction

The medieval period on Jersey and more widely over the Channel Islands has been dominated by study of sites with medieval upstanding remains, notably churches and castles, and the earlier phases of standing vernacular buildings (Rodwell 1996a; McCormack 2015). A small amount of urban archaeology has also taken place, but rural investigation has been surprisingly limited. This review has divided the material by category, with sites categorised as defensive, ecclesiastical, urban and rural. The material culture from excavations and casual finds has been considered by category, notably ceramics and coins. Emphasis has been on the architecture and development of buildings and objects as evidence for dating and trade, rather than on aspects of society or the wider economy.

There has been very limited interest in ways of life, integration of buildings in the landscape, mindsets or class dynamics and display strategies. The last part of review of the High Middle Ages draws together the evidence from the various categories to consider temporal, spatial and cultural trends, set in their wider context, but most interpretive aspects now current in later medieval archaeology are at present absent from the Channel Islands.

The political context for the first part of this period is Norman control based in mainland Normandy, building on the legacy of William Longsword. The developing feudal society is reflected in the presence of castles and ecclesiastical establishments largely supported by estates given to them by the secular elite, with both having their main interests in Normandy as well as having some commitment to the Channel Islands. The internal structures of the islands were adapted from what had gone before, and gradually acquired their distinctive characteristics that affected land tenure and legal structures. It is likely that most trading links were mainly with the nearby ports of France but could include materials that had at least indirectly come from further afield, and with some links to England which became stronger later in this period when royal power was from England. The proximity of France, and the ongoing demands in England also for French products such as wine and fine ceramics, ensured that the Channel Islands could act as brokers in maritime trade, probably even in times of war between the major powers. The archaeological evidence may not always therefore parallel the political historical narrative, and social and cultural dynamics could have their own, independent, drivers for change.

8.2 Defensive sites

Several substantial castles have been the main focus of archaeological attention in the Channel Isles, particularly Mont Orgueil, Gorey, on Jersey and Castle Cornet, St. Peter Port on Guernsey (Barton 2003). The Mont Orgueil structural development has been the focus of research, though other possible defensive sites on Jersey have also been briefly noted.

8.2.1 *Mont Orgueil*

The castle sequence at Mont Orgueil commences with English rule of the Channel Islands when King John lost control of Normandy but retained the islands, though Eustace the Monk controlled the islands until 1217 so work probably began in the few years after that, and would have been under way when conflict with France recommenced from 1224. The Channel Islands then became a 'front line' in any conflicts with France, hence the need for a major castle on both Jersey and Guernsey. Many researchers have worked on the built remains and the archives associated with the castle, though there is not agreement about interpretation of certain surviving buildings and, in part because of this, disagreement about what may have been present at any one phase but which has been swept away or modified and is unrecognisable at present due to changes made over the subsequent centuries.

This summary is based on that set out by Rodwell, but it notes the major disagreements by McCormack and Platt on several aspects that could create quite a different narrative, especially for the early phases. Further excavation could resolve some of these disputes, but others at present have no easy route to a firm conclusion.

Rodwell identified a range of buildings on the western side of the later castle that survive from the 13th century, a similar interpretation to that made earlier by Rybot, though with a more definitive analysis of the architectural details (Rybot 1933b, 29-33; Rodwell 2006, 6-8). A passage and north-east lodging tower is uncontroversial, as is the Prynne's Tower to the south-west but the interpretation of the largest room in between is disputed. This larger rectangular room is seen as a great hall, with undercroft storage beneath by Rodwell, and this is accepted by Dixon who considers that the design would have been part of an English tradition of hall and tower house (Dixon and Kennedy 2002, 16-17). Most of the castle of this phase has been completely erased but in total may have comprised a keep and two or three wards or enclosures, with perhaps three gates to provide access from one to the other and to beyond the castle. Some of walling may have been timber palisades at this phase.

However, both McCormack and Platt consider that this was the first chapel, and the domestic accommodation would have been elsewhere (McCormack 2006; Platt 2006). They argue that its layout does not match what is expected for a hall, with entry at the lower end, and the lack of a fireplace in the appropriate place which would have been inserted even if not an original feature in a hall of this status. Rodwell sees the great hall as the keep structure, but Platt (Platt and Rushton 2012) proposes another site for a circular keep, largely beneath the 16th-century Grand Battery, interpreting some of the evidence from small scale excavations and geophysics (Hall 2011) that had not been available to Rodwell; more extensive investigation may resolve this issue.

During the 13th century, possibly quite early, any timber palisades were replaced in stone and the system of circular towers and simple square gateways between the wards created a series of increasingly protected spaces, though little is known of the structures and activities within these various zones, and there is some doubt as to whether a curtain wall embedded within the Grand Battery might suggest a rather different arrangement of the Upper ward, and this could then have enclosed Platt's suggested keep (Dixon *et al.* 1998,2-5; Anon 2008, 42; Hall 2011). By the middle of the century further building ceases, with just intermittent phases of documented repairs.

The north-west sallyport was strengthened from 1327 and other buildings repaired, and with the outbreak of the Hundred Years War the French landed and besieged the castle for part of 1337, with another raid and attempt to seize the castle in 1338. The next major threat was in 1373 when the French managed to overcome the outer lines of defence but could not capture the keep. Small cannon were probably installed in 1435-36, necessitating some additional building. Despite the end of the Hundred Years War, peace was not assured on Jersey and through political machinations of the War of the Roses the castle was handed over to the Earl of Carbonnel and so into French control in 1461, only to be recovered after a five-month siege in 1468.

Commercially, two benefits for the Jersey economy came from this brief occupation and loyal Jersey forces' assistance in retaking the castle. First, Edward IV granted freedom from toll for Jerseymen throughout his kingdom, and in 1480 both the English and French monarchs agreed that the Channel Islands could retain commercial neutrality during any subsequent conflicts (Platt 2009, 38). This meant that the wider economic trends were not so directly affected by subsequent wars, though some did infuse investment in the islands when there was investment in military building campaigns and the disposable income of increased troop numbers. Militarily, however, the castle remained old-fashioned, with limited quantities of artillery until 1536 when a major investment commenced to update its defences. These will be discussed in the post-medieval section.

8.2.2 Other defensive sites

Grosnez Castle is a coastal fortification in St. Ouen comprises a circular stone curtain wall with external rock-cut ditch, probably constructed c. 1330 and seems to have been the only other functioning defence when the French raided in 1373. There is a single gateway flanked by D-shaped towers, with some internal stone buildings. Leland's map of 1540 annotates the site as destroyed, but the Richmond Map of 1795 shows some buildings, so it may be occupied if not defence, continued. No modern excavations have taken place so details of the sequence and function of any buildings remains unknown (Hills 2020).

Some ovoid field boundaries suggesting possible farmsteads may be medieval in date but may not have had a defensive role (Lake and Edwards 2008, 41-42).

8.3 Ecclesiastical sites

The medieval ecclesiastical landscape comprises two main components: parish churches, each supporting the population in a defined surrounding area, and monastic establishments of varying size, wealth and influence, though there were also numerous small chapels, some associated with manors. This made the island landscapes more densely marked with Christian structures than most of England. Mainland Norman control was dominant for both churches and monasteries which all provided income that was sent off the island to either secular or religious lords. There are parallels in some Channel Island church designs with Norman churches, but there is no consistent linkage of designs with their patron houses elsewhere.

The standing remains of all the parish and many monastic churches across the Channel Islands have been studied in detail by McCormack but research in England has demonstrated that very detailed examination by buildings archaeologists of existing fabric can reveal more complex sequences, and excavation can uncover evidence not predicted by what is visible above-ground (McCormack 1986). Not only can earlier phases be identified, but existing phases can be better understood and sometimes interpretation of standing remains can be challenged. Nevertheless, the Channel Islands are fortunate indeed to have the base line study by McCormack around which research questions can be framed.

8.3.1 Parish churches

McCormack (1986, 49) considers that it was during and immediately after Geoffrey of Montbrai's long reign as bishop of Coutances that the Norman churches were built, in the late 11th and early 12th century. These were large for their time, with a nave and chancel with some having a crossing tower at junction of the two; all were originally roofed in timber, and those parts constructed during the earliest 12th-century phase were built of rubble walling, with the quality of material improving at the end of the century with larger blocks of local stone becoming available (McCormack 1986, 57-58). Decorative elements were made from imported Caen limestone which was available in limited amounts except at Vale parish and Lihou priory churches on Guernsey (McCormack 1986, 59).

The lengths of nave and chancel varied from one church to another, with naves of two or three bays and chancels one or two bays, and the application of buttresses varied also. The churches tend to have narrower naves and proportionately longer chancels compared with English parish churches, and the nave and chancel are the same width. Like English and Normandy churches, the main doorways were normally on the south but could be at the west (McCormack 1986).

A widespread change to almost every church in the Channel Islands was the provision of a pointed stone vaulted roof, replacing the original timber. Whilst they would have provided extra protection by fire (Myres 1981), there is no evidence that this was a greater risk than in other places where timber prevailed, and it certainly continued in some Jersey churches (McCormack 1986, 82). On occasions the stone vaulting was part of an extensive if not complete rebuilding, but in most cases, it was placed on top of the existing walls. There was

no campaign of roof replacement, but happened over the course of the 13th century and at many churches this could be completed in stages, unsurprising given the costs and disruption.

In the 15th century, Chausey granite was selectively imported to both Jersey and Guernsey, but McCormack questions whether it may not have all come from those quarries but from others, and that the origin of a red as well as the grey granite requires further investigation (1986, 96). The work associated with use of this stone was often of high quality which he suggests is because craftsmen were brought from Normandy, so the use of imported stone with which they were already familiar would be a logical deduction. By the late 15th century, however, these supplies of stone were cut off, and masons were forced to use local stone, though high-quality granite and sandstone could now be acquired, (McCormack 1986, 103-104).

Each church has its own unique developmental sequence linked to their history of patronage combined with local needs, but a few generalisations can be made. Proportionately, more Guernsey churches acquired extensive aisles and chapels than Jersey churches, but many expanded only on one side. Only Town Church and St Samson on Guernsey and Town Church and St Ouen on Jersey have these to both the north and south by this time, though others such as St. Pierre-du-Bois reached this stage later. Many churches remained largely unchanged from their original form on both islands for a long period, but most were extended at some point, and updated with new inserted windows in many cases. Archaeological recording of standing remains can greatly increase understanding of sequences and should be the way to build on McCormack (1986), with the work at St Mary's Church spire being an example where three phases of development from the 12th century could be identified despite the 1834 restoration (Waterhouse 2017, 146).

Archaeological excavation has been limited at parish churches, largely because the need for interventions in advance of disturbance is relatively rare. The structural evidence revealed is discussed here, and burial evidence in the following section. Each small-scale intervention may only confirm existing interpretations, but often increases the evidence to reveal more complex developmental sequences. Excavations within Trinity church revealed burials disturbed by the 12th-century tower, the earliest standing part of the church, and this shows that there was, as expected, an earlier phase at the site not represented in the standing remains (Waterhouse 2018). Arches at the base of the tower were enlarged with Chausey granite c. 1480-1520 but no other new medieval structural information was recovered. Archaeological investigations above and below ground in the Town church, St. Helier identified herringbone masonry that may indicate an earlier phase than that previously recognised, and a reused but truncated menhir was found in the North Transept, another example from Jersey of the reuse of prehistoric standing stones (Waterhouse 2017, 146).

Three churches have revealed bell casting debris during excavation - St. Lawrence, St Saviour and Trinity (Waterhouse 2018, 303). As bells were normally cast on-site this should not be surprising, but no bell casting pits have yet been found at parish churches, though one was excavated at the Fishermen's Chapel, St. Brelade (Rodwell 1990b, 64-67). The well-preserved pit was beneath the sanctuary step (a location often little disturbed). A

rectangular pit was lined with an octagonal wooden lining within which the clay mould was formed. Sufficient mould fragments survived for the bell size and profile to be reconstructed, and some fragments showed that there had been an inscription cast around the bell (Rodwell 1990, 154-55).

8.3.2 Chapels

Only a few of possibly 100 chapels survived the purges and land sales associated with the Reformation, though some were converted to other uses and so can be studied even in an adapted form. Castle chapels have been discussed above alongside other elements of those sites. Only a small number of once-numerous manorial chapels have been identified, but one associated with Handois Manor, St. Lawrence, was incorporated into a barn and was investigated before it was demolished, though the chapel south wall had already been lost. The clay-bonded granite walled chapel was excavated and a Beauvais pottery jug and bowl sherds, all late 15th or 16th- century in date, were recovered. These were possibly used in the last phases of the chapel as an active religious building (Finlaison 2017, 162-65).

Two Jersey chapels have received detailed study - at La Hougue Bie (buildings archaeology) and the Fishermen's chapel, St. Brelade (buildings archaeology and excavation), and each are discussed below and reveal that even these small structures can have complex histories; interestingly both are very similar in size and proportion and are, according to Rodwell, designed and constructed using the Jersey foot (Rodwell 1999, 194-5).

The massive mound of La Hougue Bie is surmounted by a 12th-century chapel with later additions. There have been no excavations but a detailed architectural study has been produced by Rodwell (1999), though claimed to be only superficial. This shows a relatively intact later 12th-century two-cell chapel with a pointed barrel vault, accessed by a narrow north door and a south door which, though rebuilt later, is likely to be where the original was placed. The reason for the chapel is not immediately clear as it is not a manorial chapel, but it appears to have been chosen to deliberately Christianise the mound, and may have been intended to house the body of its benefactor though, if that were the case, later changes would have disturbed this. Another Jersey chapel, now demolished, the Notre Dame des Pas, St. Helier, was also built on a burial mound and was found to contain a single burial (Rodwell 1999, 199-200, 338).

The other major structural change at La Hougue Bie was the Dean Mabon's addition of the chapel c. 1520, emulating the Church of the Holy Sepulchre in Jerusalem, with its tomb of Christ. This was achieved at La Hougue Bie by adding a polygonal chapel to the east of the original, with a crypt with ambulatory and tomb beneath. Today, access to the crypt is through an external door, but originally there would have been stairs from the chapel down to one end of the ambulatory and egress as today, but no trace can now be seen of the stairs without more invasive investigation (Rodwell 1999, 202-08). At the same time as the chapel was added, the original interior was at least partly redecorated with wall paintings; two archangels survive intact; a later painted date of 1638 with initials ELM and ERG or EPG is unrelated (Rodwell 1999, 178-79). This chapel is an unusual but not unknown Christianisation of a prehistoric monument, but then does become unique with the addition of

the Jerusalem chapel and its associated crypt, which must have held some relic; Rodwell (1999, 208-09) makes some suggestions but the issue remains obscure. In only a few decades, the whole building was converted into a house (see the post-medieval section).

The Fishermen's Chapel, St. Brelade, was studied as an upstanding building and received some excavation between 1982 and 1984 to enable a detailed account of the development, though some points remain uncertain as the excavations were limited (Rodwell 1990b). Despite restorations and an earthquake, the recent conservation and management has helped protect this important heritage asset. The early medieval phases have already been discussed above. The Norman chapel was probably built at around the same time, perhaps immediately after, the primary phase of the current parish church which has only parts of the nave surviving from this period (Rodwell 1990, 138). There may have been a path from the chapel into the south transept of the church as a doorway (blocked in the 15th century) had been built in this unusual place for an access point. The chapel had a typical Jersey two-cell form with the altar set forward from the wall. Rodwell argues that the chapel was appropriated by a family as a chantry chapel in the 14th century when a scene of the Annunciation was painted at the east end, with kneeling figures extending along the north and south walls – presumably members of the family, and with saints also present, though they are now only fragmentary. The whole chapel was further decorated with wall paintings, now on all walls and ceiling, and sufficient survives for some interpretation (Hauff 1990a, b; Mieth 1990). Excavations revealed only late medieval floors, as earlier ones had been removed in a medieval refurbishment (Rodwell 1990, 61).

8.3.3 Monastic sites

Many of the monastic sites on the Channel Islands were very small and did not comprise the range of structures expected at major sites of the orders such as the Benedictines to which they were attached. The most substantial establishment was the Abbey of St Helier (later the Priory of the Isle) which was demolished in the 17th century as Elizabeth castle was extended (see above) though McCormack (1986, 274-75) considers that some undercrofts may have been incorporated as cisterns.

The other monastic sites were small and with tiny communities of canons; all were dependent on Norman monasteries and were partly built to manage their Jersey estates and maintain a physical and administrative presence alongside some religious duties. Most establishments have left little trace of their medieval form, and some have been partially incorporated into later structures. McCormack has listed a number of priories, some with likely locations, but many have left little or no trace above ground (McCormack 1986, 281-84).

One of the small foundations that has received archaeological attention is the Priory of St. Clement which housed only a prior and an assistant (Molyneux 2016). Excavations have produced indications of a rectangular building parallel with the road; it was roofed (at least at some point) with cut rectangular slates (Waterhouse 2016). The ceramics shows an array of vessel forms and fabrics beyond the typical gritty wares, including glazed vessels from the Saintonge and Seine Valley, and jug and bowl possibly from Beauvais.

A few sites had a more substantial physical presence, and these have attracted architectural and some archaeological investigation. The most extensively studied Jersey priory is the small site of St. Mary's on the isles of Les Écréhous, a small establishment on an isolated island given to the Abbey of Val-Richer, though with income from property in at least St. Saviour and St. Martin; it was also paid a fee of 20 sous to maintain a lighthouse (Aubin 1996; Rodwell 1996b). A complex sequence was examined, with numerous often fragmentary structures identified. The summary here is based on that provided by Rodwell (1996, 111-43, 151). The importance of these excavations, beyond their intrinsic interest, is the complexity of such sites even if only very little is visible above ground.

The early medieval chapel (discussed above) appears to have been reused by the canons and they built a hall as accommodation to the north in the early 13th century, after which they rebuilt the chapel creating a small chancel and nave. In the late 13th century, a new but slightly small single-cell chapel was built adjoining the east end of the previous chapel and accessed through it even though it was converted to domestic use. This new chapel is the only part of the complex with upstanding remains so it is possible to identify the two single-light windows in each of the east and south walls, some of which must have contained painted window glass. The chapel had a stone vaulted roof but it probably only had an earth floor, though some fragments imported sandstone may be all that is left paving. Other structures, later mainly destroyed by the sea, were located to the south and especially to the west. The west door was subsequently blocked, and a north and south door inserted, with the latter adapted to enable internal access from the hall. A possible lime kiln was temporarily constructed in the now-domestic period 2 chapel (presumably as the new chapel was being built) and then the building was provided with a stone-lined drain that came from the hall and out through the south door. These features were sealed beneath a clay floor. A grave from the period 2 was exhumed (presumably a significant person whose remains were translated) and various post holes and pads suggest some subdivisions and possibly an upper storey. The lack of a hearth suggests that it was not for cooking or accommodation and was presumably some form of ancillary building. Further phases in the 14th century were probably constructed partly in response to some of the peripheral buildings being lost to the sea. These involved the building of an extra room east of the hall together with a small rectangular building to the south. A major reorganisation followed in the 15th century when the hall was reduced in size and made a store, and the yard area on the east and south sides of the chapel were defined by a wall to almost completely enclose the complex. At the same time, the already domestic space that had been the phase 2 chapel was converted into the hall with a hearth near the west end and a timber subdivision inserted towards the west.

Lihou priory on Guernsey was a small establishment, but a high proportion of the complex is extant. The nave and chancel were probably built at the same time in the 12th century, but much of the nave walling was rebuilt in the 13th century when a pointed stone vault was added, along with a small tower on the north side of the nave. A small domestic range lay to the west and comprised a north-south 13th-century building and a conjoined east-west structure of the early 14th century (McCormack 1986, 277-80). The priory has received prolonged archaeological investigation (Sebire 2005), revealing a 14th-century glazed tile floor joining the nave and chancel; few examples of medieval floor surfaces survive at

Channel Island monastic sites. Prior to this floor there had been at least three earlier phases, with phase III dated by ceramics to the late 12th or early 13th century. Some of the finds indicate high quality architecture with Romanesque beak head decoration in an early phase and evidence for highly carved vaulting at a later date; two sun dial fragments and painted medieval window glass again indicate the levels of investment on the site, which also produced large amounts of French ceramics (Sebire 2005, 138). A substantial assemblage from a garderobe produced a significant assemblage including 'Chocolate Brown Ware' (Barton 1998). Unusually, other components of the priory have been located, with fishtraps and a dovecote identified (de Jersey 2013). This is a rare example on the Channel Islands where many components of a monastic site have been identified, but as yet a comprehensive report has yet to be published.

The chapel of Dom Hue lies close to Lihou and is supposedly an associated hermitage on a small island that has been investigated to reveal a probably medieval building which may have been the building used by a cleric from Lihou, with only Normandy Gritty ware ceramics from the period c. 1350-1450. A porpoise was found that had been deliberately buried probably to preserve the meat and is probably of medieval date (de Jersey 2019).

Vale priory, Guernsey, has little upstanding remains (McCormack 1986, 275-77), though even the small amounts show two medieval phases. Excavations 40m away from the church, limited because they were linked to new development, were adjacent to some upstanding masonry that forms part of a building that had stood on the edge of the priory complex, with some elements dated to the early/mid-14th century (de Jersey 2008). The first medieval phase comprised 12th/13th century domestic debris, with an area of stone paving in the 14th century. De Jersey (2008, 389) notes that the quality of the finds at Vale were not as high as those at Lihou (2008, 389), but as the site was quite extensive it may be that other structures would reveal a wider range of finds including coins and glazed wares missing from the assemblage adjacent to this peripheral building.

Only a small amount of upstanding walling can be identified with the priory established by Richard de Vernon on Sark which was a gift to the Abbey of Montebourg, but a surviving chapel and attached priest's house survives on Herm, first Augustinian and then Franciscan, but probably only ever housed one or two canons (McCormack 1986, 271-74).

8.3.4 Grave markers and burials

The medieval grave markers of the Channel Islands are, as is so common elsewhere, mostly reused as building materials in church rebuilding, with some probably recovered during Victorian conservation work. These have been illustrated and summarised by McCormack (1986, 60-68), but there has been no detailed study. The very fact that many appear in phases of buildings that are themselves medieval suggest that they were not considered during this period as permanent grave markers in the way that 17th- century and later memorials are. Most slabs are incomplete, though many appear to have been never full grave length. Very few slabs are trapezoid, and the rectangular forms can be quite narrow. Most are made of a yellow sandstone.

Most designs are based on the cross, though with a variety of cross head forms, and some have a stepped base that may well be the 13th-century or later. There are no elaborate floriated crosses. Two slabs have the well-recognised symbols associated with occupations, with a priest's chalice and (more unusually) wafer on a slab at St. Ouen, and a blacksmith is indicated by tongs, two horseshoes and a nail on a St Peter's slab. No Channel Island cross-inscribed grave slab has any inscription, and there are no effigies or later lightly incised floor slabs which usually had a marginal inscription.

Very few pre-Reformation monuments of any kind survive, with the most elaborate being an early 16th-century deeply carved Chausey stone monument with two figures holding a shield and pennant within architectural arcading. It is now in a buttress at St. Martin's, which McCormack (1986, 124, colour pl.6) considers this commemorates the donor who funded new windows in the south aisle. There are no late medieval tombs, but a small number of brass indents survive. Given the wealth at this period suggested by the numerous substantial stone manorial houses (see above) it might be expected that these had been common, perhaps originally associated with burial in the chantry and family chapels that were presumably housed in the aisles that had been erected in so many parish churches. Three Purbeck marble slabs were described and illustrated by McCormack (1986, 123-124); one at Vale commemorated a married couple and that at the Town Church a merchant and two wives, the third is no longer visible at St. Saviour's, with a further slab was once noted but with little detail at St. Martin's. No indent brass has been identified in Jersey and none have as yet been found reused having been removed at the Reformation.

The excavated burials at Trinity churchyard probably began in the early 11th century or earlier, on a different NW-SE alignment than later burials that were parallel with the walls of the current building. One early grave was rubble-lined and capped with stone (Waterhouse 2018, 299-300). Later earth-dug graves continued through the medieval period and beyond.

The interior of the Fishermen's Chapel, St. Brelade, had contained many burials, but most had been removed and reburied outside during Balleine's early 20th-century work, or survived only as charnel. Many of the extant burials were in wooden coffins, some partly constructed with iron nails. One burial had a large late 15th/early 16th c sherd of near-stoneware over its legs (Finlaison 1990; Rodwell 1990b). Rodwell posits that from the 14th century one family appropriated the chapel as a chantry, all the later medieval burials were probably from one family, but their survival was poor and only a short report could be provided (Rogers 1990, 152-153).

The stone-lined (or cist) graves discussed in the early medieval section continued into the High Medieval period. Graves of this kind at St Lawrence contained 12th – mid 13th century pottery and a copper alloy cross (Finlaison 1998; Waterhouse 2018, 306), and other similar graves were found at St Martin's, Grouville (Waterhouse 2017, 149). An antiquarian account records a stone-lined stone-cut grave supposedly with a knight buried in chain mail and with a sword, found under the floor of Notre Dame de Pas, a chapel demolished when Fort Regent was built (McCormack 1986, 288). Burials at St. Marie du Castel church, Guernsey, were discovered on the periphery of the churchyard but still returned a surprisingly early radiocarbon date (1035-1215), suggesting that the way the churchyard was used was not

mainly around the church at this date (Walls *et al.* 2016). Whether this was a widespread phenomenon is still not known.

The Notre Dame de Pas chapel is an example of burials in or around chapels, showing that burial was not completely controlled at parish churches, and Rodwell postulates the same may have been the case at La Hougue Bie (Rodwell 1999 199). Other examples include the five skeletons recorded in the 19th century from the site of St. Catherine's chapel (McCormack 1986, 289).

Burial at some monastic sites has also been identified; an adult, and an adult in a wooden coffin were found inside Lihou priory church beneath the 14th-century floor (Sebire 2000, 546). The limited number of internal burials probably reflects the very small number of occupants at any one time, and presumably the return to the mother house of old or ill clerics so that the functions of the institution could be fulfilled. As most were linked to Norman houses, any patrons would prefer to be buried in the mother churches rather than in an isolated outpost. The external cemetery at this site has been partially investigated, and probably was in use from the 12th to the 14th century and was presumably used by the tenants on priory estates. St. Tugual's Chapel, Herm has produced extensive evidence of burial and may in effect have been a community burial site (de Jersey and Cataroche 2012).

8.4 Urban sites

Each of the three larger islands each has only one main town (St. Helier for Jersey, St. Peter Port for Jersey and St. Anne for Alderney), and the villages are considered as part of rural settlement. Unlike many French or English towns, the Channel Island urban centres have not produced archaeological evidence that they were defined by medieval walls and gates, but there are documentary indications that St Peter Port may have been so defended. Excavation in all three towns has been limited, though the find spots of ceramics have been plotted out for St. Helier for an unpublished report (Hotton 1996).

The evidence from St Helier for the later medieval period indicates a relatively small town which is unplanned and not densely occupied. The known find spots – and places where work has indicated negative evidence – gives some indication of the extent of settlement through time, based on ceramics. Finds from the 13th-14th century form a clear distribution in an arc set back from what was the then the line of the seashore, though not parallel with it. The find spots suggest a settlement stretching over c. 800m but only c. 100m wide, suggesting a scatter of occupied plots mostly placed either side of a single street, though not necessarily with any heavily built-up street frontage.

The only substantial excavation, and that subject to a series of interruptions, was excavated between 1973 and 1986 and this produced the only complete medieval building plan – an aisled hall house of the 13th century with some external cobbled surfaces (Finlaison 1976a, 1986). The proposed reconstruction is of a small, aisled hall with four squared posts holding up the hipped roof, with an internal partition for a byre or storage area separating the area beyond one pair of posts from the rest of the space which contained a central hearth. There were stone footings for the walls, but whether they were completely of stone, as in the

reconstruction, or the base for an earth or timber-framed wall is uncertain. This is the only building that is known from Jersey from a lower social class than the numerous stone buildings described below. The location within St. Helier might imply an urban function, but its position and surroundings suggest that at least this part of the settlement was dispersed and at least partially agricultural, and was not laid out with a typical medieval urban plot arrangement with the main dwellings on the street frontage.

There is little evidence for fixed plot boundaries and repeated rebuilding on the same locations as is normal in English urban contexts. The shifting locations suggests a more open and fluid layout, and no well-metalled fixed road layout has been identified, suggesting a settlement agglomeration that is formed by a population more accustomed to a dispersed and loosely agglomerated settlement pattern. It is possible that the lack of substantial monastic and military foci – with their control over parts of the town – limited higher authority to create a planned settlement which instead spread north-east and particularly north-west from the foci of the parish church and the probable market area that is now Royal Square (Sebire 2005, 140).

A cluster of find spots from the later 15th century near the Union Steet and Parade junction as much reflects excavation as perhaps the extent of settlement, but there are far fewer finds of this period than earlier. A 15th-16th century building was found partly under Hue Street (Hotton 1996, 3).

8.5 Rural sites

Most emphasis to date has been on the substantial stone-built rural farm complexes many of which were manorial in status. Most are still occupied today and so have been subject to numerous alterations, additions, and demolitions. A typology of house and outbuilding forms, and their arrangement within the farmstead, has been constructed and linked to chronological sequence, with intensive study of numerous architectural components of the structures such as doors, windows and fireplaces (Rodwell nd). Only a brief outline is presented here, as the focus of recording and research has been on the architectural history of vernacular architecture rather than the wider archaeological remit (Stevens 1965).

Jersey farmstead settlements have a variety of biographies, some mainly rebuilding on the same site but others having slightly shifting locations, meaning that below-ground evidence may exist (Lake and Edwards 2008, 154). This would enable not only the creation of a sequence of building development but also data to enable lifestyles and the agricultural economy, but thus far only a few small-scale investigations have taken place except at Hamptonne, St. Lawrence (Rodwell 1990a, 1991, 1992b, 1993), and even here the main emphasis in publications has been on architectural development (Rodwell 2022).

Rodwell (nd MS, 20) considers that a rectangular single-roomed house formed from megalithic masonry next to La Grande Maison de la Pomare, St. Pierre-du-Bois, Guernsey, may be the oldest standing domestic structure on the Channel Islands. It has medieval windows in red Cobo stone, but closer dating is not available and its place early in a sequence of development is based on its masonry style. The earliest buildings on Jersey

comprise fragments retained as part of later buildings, though perhaps the overall ground plan was retained in many cases. Examples proposed by Rodwell (nd MS, 23-24) include La Pomare, Saints Farm and La Vieille Maison du Franc Fief, St. Brelade. A hall of the 12th or 13th century survives at Les Huriaux Place, embedded within a 15th-century structure. It may be that phases with small, very local stones, also indicate an early phase, as at the Elms, St. Ouen (Rodwell nd MS, 26). The narrow building with a two-bay hall and one-bay service room, has two small windows surviving at the back, and jambs to indicate location of three more on the front, and a segmental arch above a large trough (an *évier*) used as a kitchen sink. The form of hall and service room has been noted at several relatively early houses. Houses often acquired fireplaces from the 14th century, replacing central hearths that leave no structural trace unless there is an excavation. The earliest are probably built on a long wall, though gable-end hearths were later more popular (Rodwell nd MS, 26, 31).

A separate chamber block often can be identified at the stone houses of this date, at right-angles to the orientation of the hall, and usually detached. These blocks had storage on the ground floor and sleeping space above, accessed by an external stone staircase (Rodwell nd MS, 34). Several examples survive on Jersey, including St. Ouen's Manor (stone cellar, linked to that beneath the early hall), Samarès (with a fine stone-vaulted undercroft), La Moye, Hamptonne, Longueville (probably with a chamber fireplace) and La Maletière or Les Pres. Rodwell suggests many others, though most have been considerably altered at later dates, and he considers that in total around 30 can be suggested for Jersey, with over 60 on Guernsey and 5 on Sark (Rodwell nd MS, 39). Grouville Court has an unvaulted cellar under the hall but vaulted under another chamber, and still has two original lateral chimney breasts with octagonal stacks surviving (Rodwell nd MS, 40).

The next form of house was a three-celled structure, integrating sleeping space within the building, and this seems to have been popular as a new form until the end of the 15th century, though remaining current in Guernsey for another half century. An elaborate example, La Porte, which Rodwell (nd MS, 45-46) considers is c. 1400, has a high-end principal chamber, and a triple kitchen fireplace across the gable end at the service end of the building. The Hamptonne house had galleries that linked upper story rooms across the central hall. Guernsey houses of this period often had a slightly different design, with stair turrets at the high end of the hall (Rodwell nd MS, 47). There may be 90 medieval houses before 1450 surviving at least in part on Jersey, of which 40 survive in sufficient amount to be identified as three-cell, but these tend to be less well preserved than many on Guernsey.

The houses from the period 1450-1550 as dated by Rodwell (nd MS, 61) are far more common on Guernsey, with 112 examples compared to only 16 in Jersey, and with only a third of the latter three-cell. The main rooms, previously at the high ends of houses, were moved to the opposite end, and the stone stair turret directly to the upper rooms were placed where the back door had been (Rodwell nd MS, 64). Some houses were extended, with extra rooms for a variety of functions. The St. Ouen's Manor new range was in line with the existing building, and an unusually grand addition of four bays and two floors. The lower floor was one long storage space with two rooms above, one with a latrine projecting from the gable end of the Houses joined together are rare, but are known from at Chestnut Farm and Les Marais room (Rodwell nd MS, 68-69).

A range of sites must have existed across the landscape, including watermills (Rodwell 1992a, 1994; Watts 2018, 2021) and windmills, low status farmsteads, fishermen's cottages, and craftsmen's workshops, but most of these have not been located (but see forthcoming book on Jersey mills by C. Aubin based on many years of research). One activity which should be archaeologically detectable is ironworking whether smithing or smelting. Iron slag from Les Ouzets, Guernsey suggests a short phase of metalworking with 3.6 kg perhaps indicating smelting (de Jersey 2009). The mention of convex surfaces suggests furnace bottoms, but these are not illustrated. The range of rural activity and settlement across Jersey, and the extent of the open field systems, is indicated in a recent evaluation of the documentary sources (Stevens 2021).

8.6 Ceramics – sources, typology, and use

8.6.1 Introduction

Research on medieval ceramics in Britain and western Europe has a long period of research, with most attention paid to products which travelled considerable distances, and those for which kiln sites are known. However, more recent research has moved to concentrate on the sites of consumption and, given that Jersey and the other Channel Islands do not seem to have had any indigenous production at this time, it is this research that is most relevant here. The two main concerns of early research were on the source of a ceramic type and its date range. Pottery was mainly used to date sites, but some specialists were also very interested in long-distance trade. However, even at an early point in medieval ceramic studies there was interest in regional distribution, first developed by Jope who also noted absence of fabrics as well as their presence and so defined regional distribution systems.

Thanks to the work of a number of specialists, it is now known that the production of medieval ceramics was largely concentrated in regional centres and the outputs of several regions often circulated sufficiently widely that they overlapped with those of neighbouring production centres. These are largely identified by visual inspection of the pottery fabric as the clay source and form of temper is usually distinctive. Some regions concentrated on particular forms such as jugs or cooking pots, but most produced a wider range of forms. Research priorities in Britain were first set out by Mellor and subsequently updated and revised by Irving, and they are being further revised in the ongoing updating of regional research frameworks across both England and Wales (Mellor 1994; Irving 2011).

Medieval ceramics on the Channel Islands benefitted from the work of Barton in establishing the main sources of ceramics and their fabric and typologies found on the islands (Barton 1977, 1998, 2003). Further site-based studies have built on this framework but have not benefited from the specialist attention at an overview level that many parts of Britain have received. The Channel Isles are noted in Irving (2011, 43) where the aims can be seen as much more basic than for most English regions, but there has been little progress on these in the last decade, so the discussion here relies on published excavation report finds and comparison with other regions and sites that seem appropriate for comparative purposes.

The inferences drawn should be seen as provisional, but they reveal the possibilities for medieval ceramics which may at first sight appear limited in their interpretive potential.

Whilst there is no type series, several fabric types appear to dominate the assemblages. The finewares receive much of the attention as they offer better opportunities for dating and identification of particular production centres, but the coarsewares are generally the most common. Normandy Gritty Ware is the overwhelmingly dominant coarseware, and it is used for jars but also jugs with strap handles (de Jersey and Cataroche 2012, 426). Find sites are spread across the Channel Islands, including St Tugual's Chapel, Herm, and several sites on Guernsey and Jersey (de Jersey and Cataroche 2012). Whilst some vessels are plain, the use of finger impressions is common. This occurs on jug strap handles and below the rims of cooking pots. A range of forms, including large 12-13th century jars with applied rouletted strips, have also been recovered (de Jersey 2009, Fig. 5).

8.6.2 The Old Street, St Helier assemblage

A significant 13th-century assemblage was recovered from the aisled house and adjacent yard found at the Old Street excavations (Finlaison 1976b). The house was separated from earlier phases by a sterile sand-blown layer and had no alterations or structural replacements and with numerous joining sherds across the site suggesting an occupation of decades rather than longer. It would seem that there was little later occupation of this area till the post-medieval period which means that the assemblage represents a clear chronological horizon when most ceramics were being imported from France; some of the jugs may have been produced in Rouen, but none of the other vessels were ascribed any source. The majority of the vessels were gritty fabric, presumably Normandy Gritty Ware (with the grits of quartz, quartzite and chert), but another source is indicated by other vessels with a granite grit temper and some of these vessels were green or brown glazed on the neck and shoulders (Finlaison 1976b, 488).

The Old Street jars and cooking pots have a range of profiles that can be paralleled at Maître Ile of the Ecréhous (Rybot 1933a); some have rim forms which would have been suitable to support lids; no ceramic lids were identified, but it is likely many of these were wood. Some vessels with saggy bottoms may represent cooking pots that would have sat in the ashes though one was not sooted, so may have been unused. A few body sherds show rouletted decoration on the shoulders, but one rim form with this decoration may well be a jug though that cannot be confirmed as it had no handle or lip on the sherd, but a very similar jug profile in similar fabric had this decoration. Some small jars had thumb decorated immediately below the lip.

The Old Street assemblage contains a surprisingly large proportion of vessels that were jugs, with rims, handles and a few bases represented. Many sherds have no glaze, but it seems that patchy glaze was present on many vessels, in a range of colours including greens, reds, yellows and browns. Some decoration is indicated by colour, for example with a redecoration sealed by a yellow glaze. Most decoration, however, is not created by glaze but by rouletting and, most prominently, thumb impressions around the base or on applied strips. Similar vertically arranged elements are also present with scale decoration and

horizontal lines of pinched decoration are probably also from jugs. The jug handle forms are remarkably varied, with solid and hollow rod handles, and solid strap handles, some with thumbed decoration and others plain. Less common forms in the assemblage include a cresset and a roof finial.

Illustrated profiles of cooking pots such as those from Old Street, St Helier (Finlaison 1976b) and Les Ouzets, Guernsey (de Jersey 2009, Fig. 6), suggest relatively small cooking pots under 20cm in diameter, and this may reflect the size of the groups that they were servicing. Large jars, probably for storage, are also notable elements in the repertoire, and these can have applied rouletted strips.

8.6.3 The comparative ceramic material and overall implications

Early 20th-century excavations at Gorey Castle, with limited stratigraphic precision, and those in the 1970s with more effective context recording, provided Barton with material to provide an overview for this military site (Barton 1977, 1984). La Hougue Bie unfortunately did not yield much medieval ceramic material, with some Normandy Gritty Ware and a couple of sherds of Chocolate Brown Ware and possibly Normandy Stoneware (Finlaison 1999). The Fishermen's Chapel produced a range of similar fabrics and some near-stonewares from Northwest France, all probably from the century from 1450 (Finlaison 1990).

The Les Écréhous assemblage helps fill some chronological gaps in the Jersey ceramic sequence, with Rouen jugs from the 13th century, gritty wares with paler fabric in the 14th century, in the period 1380-1450, green-glazed gritty cooking pots and coarse brown earthenware vessels, from Northern France and Brittany respectively, dominate the assemblage (Finlaison 1996). By the later 15th century Developed Normandy gritty ware takes over with its distinctive black colour and perhaps made on a faster wheel, with some early Normandy stoneware and early Buffwares present.

Barton provided a short overview of Guernsey medieval ceramics which can for now be also applied in outline to Jersey (Barton 1998). Most of the Jersey fabrics are well represented at the major excavations at Castle Cornet, Guernsey, which in contrast provided very large assemblages, and remains the main assemblage for detailed comparison with Jersey material (Barton 2003). Green-glazed jugs have been noted at a few sites, with one strap handle from Les Ouzets, Guernsey (de Jersey 2009, not illustrated). It is notable, however, that polychrome Saintonge pottery that is frequent on Guernsey is rare on Jersey, whereas Jersey used gritty-ware jugs from Normandy, decorated with green glaze and red paint on the shoulders instead (Finlaison 1996, 235). This suggests some common sources of supply, particularly for coarsewares, but some ceramic forms came from divergent sources.

The Gorey Castle material discussed by Barton was largely late medieval or later and came from either England or France, though a small amount of maiolica was also recovered that had been produced in Italy and the Netherlands. Most of the English material was from the southwest of England, and French material from Normandy, though at that time many of the fabrics could not be attributed to a region.

The conclusions on the ceramics are that there was no local production of pottery during this period and most items came from France until a shift to greater English material at the very end of the medieval period. The Normandy Gritty wares represent the equivalent of locally produced coarsewares in England, but the range of finewares are largely for jugs and come from the same French production centres as seen in southern England. Again, as seen elsewhere, the largest and most diverse assemblages are recovered from castle and monastic sites, though as there are few substantial assemblages from urban or secular rural contexts the ways in which ceramics were used across society cannot yet be explored. At present there are only hints that the ceramic supply, and possibly uses, varied between the various islands, but larger and better dated assemblages across the later medieval period are needed, especially for Jersey, to enable these indications to be further explored. The lack of identified pits in St. Helier, which are often the most productive repositories for urban artefact and ecofact assemblages in England, further inhibit understanding of the ceramic sequence and range.

8.7 Coins and the monetary economy

Finds of medieval coins have been made at a number of excavations, though the urban centres of St Helier and St. Peter Port have only produced a few medieval coins, with two from the medieval house at Old Street, St. Helier (McCammon 1984). More have been recovered from fortified sites such as Mont Orgueil (McCammon 1984, 97-98), Château de Marais and Castle Cornet, with others from Lihou Priory (Sebire 2000). The few metal-detecting coin or token finds have been from the very late medieval or early modern period. Coins and tokens come not only from England but also France and elsewhere in Europe, reflecting not only changing political relations but the international connections more obviously reflected in the ceramics. The complexity of financial transactions, and the variety of currencies used in the documentation, reflects a very mixed coinage, but it remarkably little has been recovered given the expected intensity of use at least in the ports where international trade and taxation should have enabled and required a fully monetised economy. There is little evidence that the periods of political and military instability and raids encouraged the burial of hoards, unless the damage was much less than implied in some of the documentary sources and they were generally recovered.

The overall impression, therefore, is that the monetary economy was socially and geographically restricted for most of the Middle Ages on the Channel Islands, though this needs testing with excavation on a wider range of settlement types. One might have expected the garrisons in the major castles to have spent their wages in the towns, and so provided a flow of coinage augmenting that from merchants obtained through their commercial transactions, but there is little evidence of this stimulation of an active later medieval monetary economy on the Channel Islands.

8.8 Conclusions

Investigations of the medieval archaeology of Jersey, as with the other islands, has concentrated on certain architecturally and artefactually rich sites, though many of these have only been very partially investigated and yielded small artefact assemblages. Study of

environmental archaeology, sediments and faunal remains has been largely absent, though human remains have received recent and detailed attention.

Most of the archaeology has concentrated on elite sites, either externally commanded military sites or monastic sites which also have been largely created and maintained on the instructions of external owners and patrons. Military sites reflected inward investment in the interests of mainly English monarchs, but the monastic establishments were also administrative centres for the extraction of surplus to the benefit of mother houses not on the islands. Parish churches will have received some local patronage, but many were also sending income abroad, and how changes were funded in relation to local and external income is unknown. The manorial vernacular architecture indicates considerable investment in substantial stone building that was within wider changes in lifestyle and architectural style seen across both France and England, though with local variants visible on Jersey and Guernsey. How these rural structures compared with the homes of most of the population remains obscure, and although one house plan comes from St. Helier, there is little indication of urban architecture or culture despite the presence, it is assumed, of a vibrant mercantile community on both Jersey and Guernsey. The limited range of coin finds in both urban and rural contexts contrasts with castle and monastic finds, which may suggest that a monetary economy was not as widespread as might be expected until the very end of the Middle Ages, though this impression may be rectified when more urban sites can be examined, and more excavation takes place on rural sites of all social levels.

8.9 Research Themes

The assessment of the medieval archaeological resource reveals the traditional nature of much of the existing work on the period. Archaeological knowledge about the later medieval period appears to be very point specific, and particularly reliant on standing buildings. The assessment makes clear that the state of knowledge is very traditionally ordered in its focus and that 'interpretative aspects now current in later medieval archaeology are at present absent' – it would be interesting to map these current interests onto the resources to see areas of potential addressing a more contemporary agenda whilst also building and adding to the extant knowledge base.

A greater understanding of the monastic landscape around the buildings, for example, would help to reveal if Jersey was considered to be a liminal place – so sought after by early monastic foundations, if indeed it is 'more densely marked with Christian structures than most of England'. The process of mapping these landscapes might also reveal any relationship between medieval and prehistoric monuments and landscapes. As part of this it would be interesting to consider Jersey as an island specifically - its relationships with medieval shipping and France/England.

New techniques might also be brought to bear on existing data sets. If the skeletal remains are still accessible from the excavations of burials, and if not – from future excavations, DNA analysis would, in the context of the island's medieval history, prove particularly interesting.

Urban archaeology on the island seems to offer the opportunity to reassess the nature of planning and organic growth in medieval urban context, albeit the largest site is comparatively small – it would be interesting to assess when and how it gained urban attributes, including an understanding of the power structures – manorial, seigneurial ownership of fiefs and the strong parish-based set up with Constables and all the various parish officials. The area of the town covers at least half a dozen fiefs (Stevens 1965). All land belonged to the Duke of Normandy (ie the Sovereign) who granted land (fiefs) to Seigneurs, some kept as Fief du Roi (often waste land), with some grants of land made to religious houses in Normandy such as Abbaye de Mont St Michel.

It would be good to know more about the extent and accessibility of grey literature for the urban area. A concerted campaign of watching briefs would help to add to archaeological knowledge from the urban centre and more extensive opportunities for excavation when any development was planned.

However, given the predominantly rural landscape of the island, the lack of understanding about its rural history, drawn out by the assessment, is particularly problematic. The manorial structures of the landscape would be relevant to reconstruct, mapping the various ecclesiastical and secular entities, including mills. Settlement forms as well as farmstead forms would be an interesting start point to capture the exploitation of the island's resources (Lake and Edwards 2008).

As noted above, integrating the ceramic, metal, building and landscape archaeology is the most obvious way to move away from antiquarian categorisation of the island's medieval heritage and to begin to build a more holistic narrative about medieval life on the island.

- 1) The fragmentary and very incomplete nature of recording for the period seems to be a major hurdle to further planning.
- 2) It would be helpful to have a comprehensive list of the repositories for archaeological interventions – from the antiquarian, to contemporary grey literature and fieldwalking/metal detecting.
- 3) The island's HER should be fully utilised to draw together data from the period and allow analysis of distribution, patterns and gaps in our knowledge.
- 4) A calendar of medieval sources would allow research topics and sites identified in the assessment to be identified and pursued.
- 5) There needs to be a concerted effort to illuminate the landscape around the sites and buildings identified in the assessment – the monastic estate, the parish and the manoir. Identifying boundaries and shared resources can often help to build a more holistic understanding of the significance of the buildings themselves and the role they played socially and economically. A greater sense of the medieval landscape will also open an understanding of the agrarian structures of the island.

- 6) Boundaries could be digitised from historical maps, whilst aerial photographs from the 1940s could be used to map historic landscape features, with modern satellite and LiDAR used to add in crop marks and less visible landscape features.
- 7) This in turn would feed into a discussion about the distinctiveness of Jersey as an island.

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